

Southern Africa **REPORT**



Vol. 1 No. 1

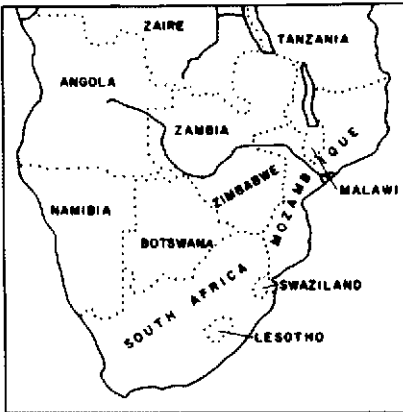
June 1985

Southern Africa REPORT

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Southern Africa REPORT

is produced by a volunteer collective of the Toronto Committee for the Liberation of Southern Africa (TCLSAC),

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To paraphrase Mark Twain, the reports of our death have been greatly exaggerated. TCLSAC lives - and the first issue of *Southern Africa Report* (formerly *TCLSAC Reports*) which you now hold in your hand is proof positive of that fact. True, as some of you will have heard, we've had some trying times during the past year or so: a financial squeeze (which has made it impossible for us to continue with any paid office staff), the impact of a much harsher political climate in the world at large, even some waning of volunteer energies within the Committee itself.

A crisis of sorts. Yet it was equally apparent to most of us that the current moment was no time for support for the struggle in Southern Africa to be slackening off. On the one hand, South Africa's wars of destabilization in the region continue to take their deadly toll - in Mozambique, in Angola, elsewhere - in a manner starkly parallel to American activities in Central America. On the other, the struggle inside South Africa itself continues to surge forward dramatically on any number of fronts. And then there is the fact that, closer to home and especially in the United States, the anti-apartheid movement, broadly defined, has taken on an extraordinary new lease on life.

The result for TCLSAC? In a series of meetings over a number of months we evaluated frankly our strengths and weaknesses, our successes and our failures, our past, present and future. And we discovered that there continues to be a firm core of committed people, prepared to weather the storm and to work to revitalize the committee.

We have had to be realistic. In the short run both our finances and our numbers have counselled a narrowing of the range of our activities - in order to do a smaller number of things much more effectively than we have been able to do them in the past year or so. For the time being we cannot keep our



Billy Paddock/Afrabix

office open, for example, and must turn our telephone over to an answering machine. But we will continue to sponsor public meetings on developments both inside South Africa and beyond; we will continue, through our CIMA (Committee for Information on Mozambique and Angola) project, to encourage a deeper, more balanced understanding of Southern Africa on the part of the media; we will continue to take part, with CUSO, in the task of recruitment of people to work in Mozambique. And we will continue with our publication, *Southern Africa Report*, seeking to improve it substantially and to turn it into an ever more effective focus for information and debate regarding developments in Southern Africa - and regarding Southern Africa-related developments in Canada.

Needless to say, we will also continue to work as closely as possible with the many other groups in Canada who are as dedicated as we are to assisting the peoples of Southern Africa in their efforts to win a more humane future for themselves. However, we do feel that we have a unique voice to add to the Southern Africa support movement in Canada. Not some fixed and unbending line, to

be sure, but rather the voice of a group of people with a long and diverse experience in southern Africa and in southern African support work; we expect that the pages of the *Southern Africa Report* will evidence a useful and independent sensibility, born from that experience.

At the same time, we fully intend that *Southern Africa Report* be open to new experiences and new voices. We seek to confront the most challenging questions about southern Africa, while also providing a forum for all those who wish to participate with us in the kind of informational work and creative dialogue which the importance of the current moment in that region of the world demands. Of course, in the first instance, we welcome your readership and your financial support (see membership and subscription details elsewhere in this issue!) But we would also like to hear from you - your comments, criticisms and contributions. In the meantime, the reader can rest assured. As with South Africa, as with Mozambique (whose tenth anniversary of independence we celebrate with this issue), so with TCLSAC: a luta continua, the struggle continues.

1975-1985 Independence Day

June 25, 1985, marks the tenth anniversary of Mozambican independence and we in TCLSAC will gather to celebrate the occasion. It is important to do so. Yet, truth to tell, in Mozambique the conditions of living are extraordinarily difficult and the capacity of the government to improve the situation is severely circumscribed. In liberation support movement circles there is a mood of disappointment about the fate of the Mozambican revolution. Some may even think that there is relatively little to celebrate!

There are reasons for disappointment. It is certainly true, for example, that Mozambique has not realized much of the promise of humane, socialist development which it sincerely offered on that first independence day ten years ago. Although broad advances have been made in education and public health and many individual projects have succeeded, Mozambique's economy is in a shambles: production down in almost every sector, food scarce, export earnings reduced to a bare minimum. Meanwhile, the FRELIMO government grasps desperately for the means of economic survival: western aid and investment, membership in the IMF, more space for the private sector.

And then there is *Nkomati*, last year's Accord with the South Africans which found Mozambique entering, with considerable pomp and ceremony, into a *non-aggression pact* with the *Apartheid* regime. The chief losers: the African National Congress of South Africa, who were to have their already limited base in Mozambique cut back very much further.

Why have these things - the

"failure" of socialist economic policies, the Nkomati Accord - occurred? Only a full-length book could do justice to the complex range of factors involved: the bleak legacy of Portuguese colonialism, an unprecedented series of natural disasters throughout the first ten years, FRELIMO's own errors of omission and commission (many of the latter itemized in an impressively frank spirit of self-criticism at the party's Fourth Congress in 1983).

Yet, in the end, one must concur with President Samora Machel and his conclusion that the single most important cause of Mozambique's current problems "lies in the situation in Southern Africa and the wars which have been forced upon us" - the ferocious wars of destabilization launched against Mozambique by first Rhodesia and then South Africa (with the latter also being joined in its destabilization project by a mare's-nest of other unsavoury allies, ranging from South Africa's local allies Malawi and the Comoros, through Saudi Arabian, Israeli and certain Portuguese interests, to, in all probability, various undercover arms of the United States' government).

Far from abating after Nkomati, the war gained in scope and ferocity. It is marked by consummate cynicism and ruthlessness but also directed with great skill towards doing the maximum economic, political and social damage to Mozambique. The instrument: the MNR (the so-called *Mozambique National Resistance*), a force first constructed by the Rhodesians out of the detritus of Portuguese colonialism (from ex-PIDE (security police) personnel,

for example) and given new life - in terms of training, material and logistical support - by South Africa after the triumph of the Zimbabwean revolution. Offering an ideological alternative to FRELIMO as a means of popular mobilization has never been the strategy of these "armed bandits" (as the Mozambican government refers to them). Instead the most brutal means of terrorizing and intimidating local populations have been employed; simultaneously, key socio-economic targets - transport and communications links, economic installations and communal villages, party and state personnel - have been selected for systematic destruction (*see box*).

Mozambique has fought grimly to stave off its military enemies. In the absence of alternative sources of significant support, in the Eastern bloc or elsewhere, FRELIMO has felt compelled to play a complicated game on the international plane. Apparently Mozambique is wagering that both in South Africa and in the international capitalist world there exists a division between one group of policy-makers who think they can now ensnare a severely weakened FRELIMO in the toils of neo-colonialism and another group who prefer to pursue the overthrow of the present government by force. Perhaps by making judicious concessions to the neo-colonizing group, reasons FRELIMO, we can play upon this division, helping to strengthen the neo-colonizers' hand in policy-making *vis-à-vis* Mozambique and to lift some of the weight of overt aggression from outside.

If so, such moves as membership in the IMF and the acceptance of U.S. food aid and

South African investment could eventually be seen to have ensured both economic and political survival and, with survival, the necessary breathing-space within which Mozambique can seek, in turn, to strengthen its long-term resistance to neo-colonialism. Not that this kind of international jockeying for position – even if it were to prove to be reasonably successful – is thought of as a sufficient strategy in and of itself. Mozambique is also doing what it can to strengthen its military effort internally, to revive its economy and to retain the egalitarian thrust of its social programmes.

For the longer term, Mozambicans also can take some solace

from the fact that the struggle has continued to escalate inside South Africa in recent months – even if Mozambique itself can do little enough, for the moment, to advance that struggle. When the *apartheid* monster has been dragged down from within by its own people a very much smoother path will open up for Mozambique, as for all the countries of Southern Africa. In effect, all those who support the revolutionary struggle inside South Africa are supporting the Mozambican struggle as well.

But this is not enough. It is difficult to ignore the fact that in Mozambique, over the past twenty years, we have seen a people first freeing itself from a devastatingly

oppressive colonialism and then launching a very promising and impressive project of humane and egalitarian social reconstruction. Nor, as we have argued above, can we forget the main cause of that country's present difficulties. It would only serve to fortify South Africa's own destructive project in the region if those who should be supporting the Mozambican revolution in this, its most difficult hour, were to yield to the temptation to slacken that support. Rather against the odds, something important of the revolutionary process survives there. June 25th can, in consequence, be a day of celebration. We would suggest that it also be a day of rededication.

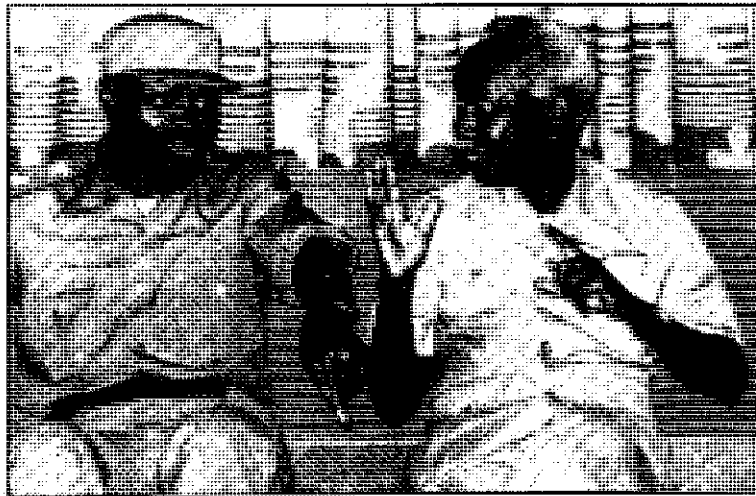
“We won't allow the FRELIMO government to be overthrown” — NYERERE

The following is an account, from the Tanzanian News Agency, of a meeting addressed by President Julius Nyerere; it is datelined Dar es Salaam, May 7, 1985.

“Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere has said Tanzania would provide the rear base for a fresh war to liberate Mozambique and South Africa if the Pretoria regime's manoeuvres to overthrow the FRELIMO government in Maputo succeeded.

“The government owned Daily News reported in a front page story that the Tanzanian leader told party officials at the party ideological college in Dar es Salaam that Tanzania would not sit back and watch South Africa topple the Mozambican government.

“Mozambique President Samora Machel will return to Nachingwea (in Southern Tanzania) and the liberation war will start afresh”, the President declared.



“He said this time the onslaught would thoroughly involve FRELIMO and the African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa and sweep right through to Capetown.

“We want our enemies, especially apartheid South Africa, to understand this: we won't allow the FRELIMO government to be overthrown”, Nyerere said.”

DIA DA INDEPENDENCIA 1985

I stand
in a street in Maputo
weighing the chances

Remember, ten years ago,
the euphoria:
Independencia, not morte
after ten long years of war

The stadium
drenched with rain
as the flag
inched its way
...up
and we... exploded.

Too many explosions since.
Ten more long years.
Inching up...
crashing down

Sport of history
— dry and decadent Iberia
working its limited magic
for five hundred years —
of human error
and the gods of rain

John S. Saul Maputo, 1985

Above all:
mad but logical,
os Sul-Africanos
unleashing war like a cyclone,
probing —
mad but logical —
for weaknesses

finding them,
twisting the knife,
invisible to the outside world
(or so it seemed),
to scar a generation,
rape a land.

bandidos armados,
horrors that defy poetry,
beggar prose,
yet still...
a people survives

euphoria, no
this world's too cruel for that —
but remains, the long climb
...and the will

a people survives
and inches its way
...up.

Ten Years After...

BY JOHN S. SAUL

June 25, 1975. A few minutes after midnight as the new Mozambican flag was raised. Oblivious to the falling rain, all of us who crowded into Machava Stadium roared our approval. Ten years of armed struggle against Portuguese colonialism were crowned by this exciting moment.

John Saxby and I were there as invited guests for that first Independence Day, delegates of the Toronto Committee for the Liberation of Portugal's African Colonies (TCLPAC - TCLSAC's first incarnation). But as members of the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique put the point, they also thought of us as "the delegates of the Canadian people". FRELIMO, having duly noted the fact that "official Canada" had cast its lot with Portugal and not with the Mozambican populace during the

latter's long years of anti-colonial struggle, had chosen not to invite the Canadian government to participate in that first day of celebration!

Not merely the flag-raising, but the whole week of festivities which swirled around that first independence day, provided an emotional high. A few years earlier I had visited the liberated areas of Tete Province with FRELIMO guerillas and experienced the heady sense of a people taking control of its own destiny, a people making its own history. I had that same sense now, in trumps.

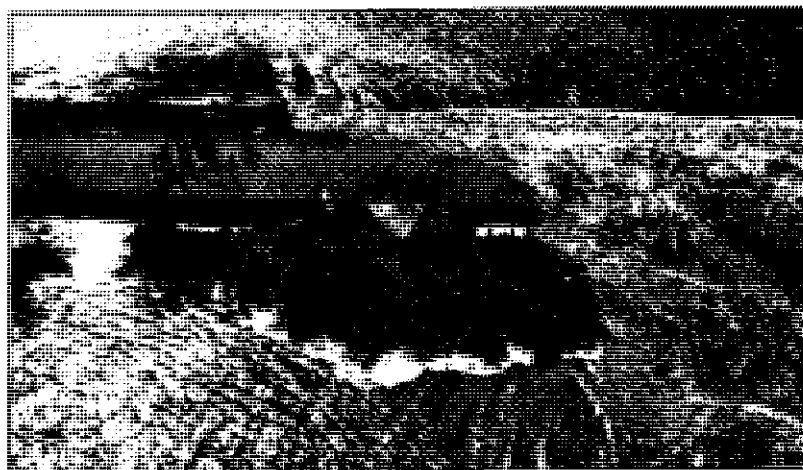
Can ten years have passed since that first independence day? In some ways it seems like only yesterday. In other ways, however, it has been a long ten years. Certainly Mozambican leaders I talked

to in 1975 had no illusions about the difficulties that lay ahead, the challenges which they anticipated would far outstrip anything they had confronted during the armed struggle. They had seized the country from the most backward of all colonialisms; moreover, they could see signs that even that legacy of extreme underdevelopment was to be further exacerbated by the panicky and vindictive flight of the Portuguese, those who had so exclusively harboured to themselves the few skills and resources which colonial society had to offer to the post-colonial development effort. Such leaders knew, too, that the regional environment in which they must seek to advance their revolutionary project would be a hostile one, with the white-minority regimes of both Rhodesia and South Africa posing long-term threats.



Carlos Cardoso/ALM

Railways passenger train destroyed by bandits in central Mozambique.



Anders Nilsson/AIM

Heavy rains in Northern Maputo Province flood the road linking Maputo to Gaza province.

These facts did penetrate the euphoria of the first days – although, in truth, only tangentially. We were too busy celebrating. Besides, it was tempting to think that everything was possible after so famous a victory. From the vantage-point of 1985, however, it is evident that such hard facts have become less notional, more real, with each passing year. The cruelty of the political and economic vise in which Mozambique now finds itself means that there is far less room for euphoria this independence day.

I have kept in close touch with the Mozambique revolution during the ten years since that first, glorious celebration, visiting on numerous occasions (including, once again as an invited guest, at the time of the Fourth Congress) and even working there, teaching at the FRELIMO Party School in 1981-82. I have had a privileged opportunity to witness at close hand both the accomplishments and the failures, the strengths and the weaknesses, of the first decade of independence. It is on the basis of this experience that I can also affirm the point made in the lead article of this issue of *Southern Africa Report*: the crucial importance, the devastating impact, of the war of destabiliza-

tion which continues to be waged against Mozambique and the absolute primacy that this factor should have in our minds as we mark the tenth anniversary.

A recent visit (in April-May of this year) once again dramatized for me the extreme difficulties of the present moment in Mozambique. As noted, the war continues, the list of Mozambique's external enemies is a daunting one, the economy refuses any very spectacular upturn. At the same time, I did see positive signs. Particularly in the centre of the country, where the war has been waged the longest, FRELIMO has begun to succeed in its attempt to find a more effective military strategy. The key lies in finding a contemporary equivalent of that rooting of the war effort in the exertions of the local populations themselves which was so important to FRELIMO's success in the days of armed struggle against the Portuguese.

Thus, in the central provinces, the grouping of such populations in defensible villages and their organization into effective militias seems to be advancing. Even more innovative has been the development of military units intermediate between local militias and the army *per se*, units made up of lo-

cal people but given a higher degree of military training than mere militia members; returned to their localities where they will have a particularly clear familial and economic stake in the war effort, these citizen soldiers continue to operate under army discipline, available for offensive action against the armed bandits. Important steps, needless to say, despite the hard reality that every kind of military effort continues to be constrained by the severe economic limits within which the FRELIMO government is operating.

There was also a sophistication in the analyses made by Mozambican political leaders regarding their attempts to manoeuvre for breathing-space on the international plane which might surprise many of the country's left critics. Certainly the leaders I talked with (including President Machel) presented a pretty full catalogue of the probable forces ranged against them, while also weighing quite coolly the odds for and against their complicated strategy, mentioned in our lead article, of trying to play off neo-colonizers against militarists in the imperial camp. Frank, too, was the appraisal of the limited number of cards Mozambique has to play in this game, and of the possible risks to long-term socialist goals of tactical concessions made to neo-colonialism. As one Minister put the point to me, there does exist the danger of FRELIMO waking up one day and discovering that *nos não somos nos* (we are no longer ourselves)!

Sobriety, too, characterized the economic calculations of many of the country's economic planners, calculations now made within the framework of a new overall policy guideline, that of the *Economia da Guerra* (War Economy). Of course, this guideline is very far removed, because of the imperatives of war, from the high hopes for a renovated economic strategy which marked FRELIMO's Fourth Congress in 1983. Moreover, on

this front too, the apparent imperatives of pragmatism and survival economics seem sometimes to threaten a blurring of the socialist vision. Nonetheless, the current crisis has also served to bring Mozambican planning ever more firmly down to earth, to a confrontation with the real possibilities of production at the district and provincial levels under the very hard conditions, economic and logistical, which exist. While obviously focussed upon the immediate demands of underwriting the war effort economically, such a trend may also have the long term effect of helping to make planning for economic development a far less abstract and far more effective exercise in Mozambique than it has sometimes been in the past.

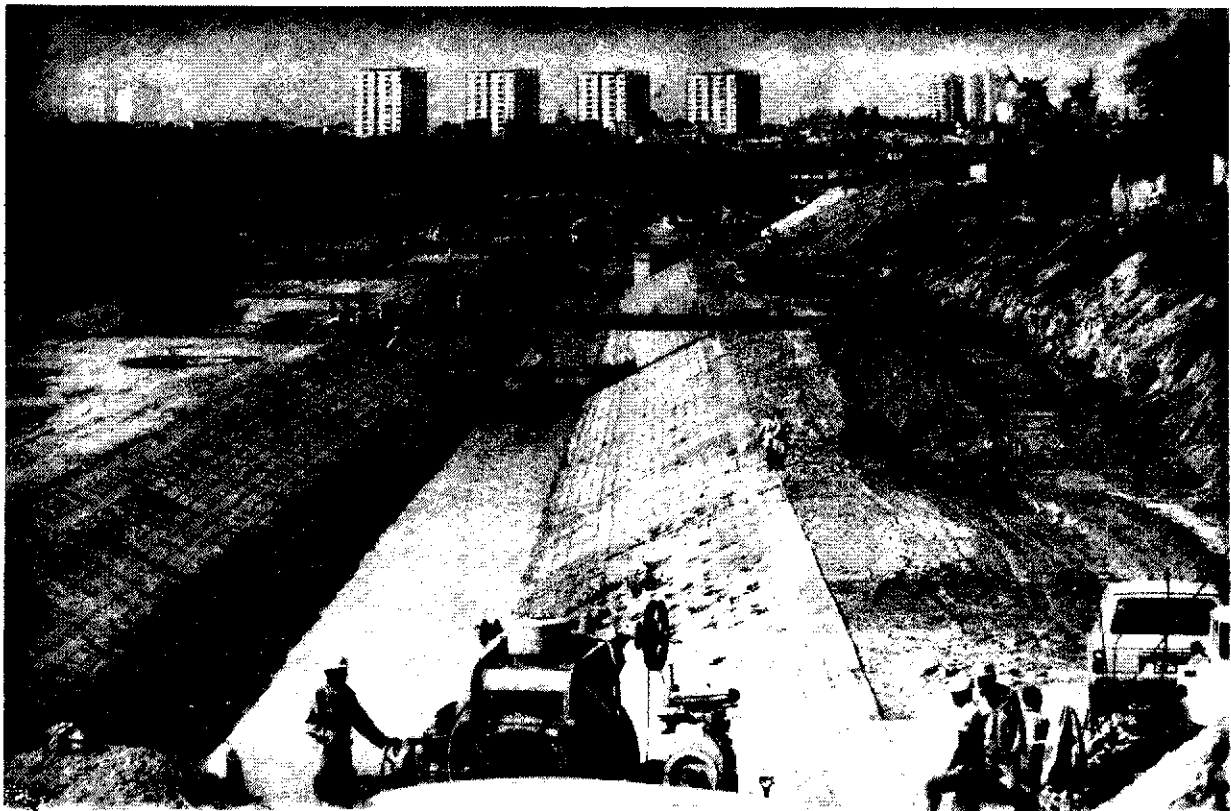
These things having been said, you will find no easy optimism

here. Merely a sense that, as I wrote recently in concluding a soon-to-be-published work on Mozambique*, "it is impossible to 'factor out' from the analysis of the present conjuncture a consideration of the historical process which has produced FRELIMO and grounded that movement in a popular revolution. The leadership cadre which launched that revolutionary process is still in place, frayed at the edges certainly, older (although, one suspects, wiser), girded for one further attempt to recast the foundations of its revolution. And the link - replete with tensions and contradictions but forged in struggle - which has joined FRELIMO to the popular classes in Mozambique also remains in place, stretched, perhaps, to the breaking point but in place."

"Such assertions are not premissed on mere faith; it is the anal-

ysis of the long arc of Mozambican development ... which underpins them. Nor can there be any question of underestimating the odds against the successful attainment of FRELIMO's goals." Nonetheless, "in Mozambique - the phrase has worn thin through repetition, but is still true - a luta continua, the struggle continues".

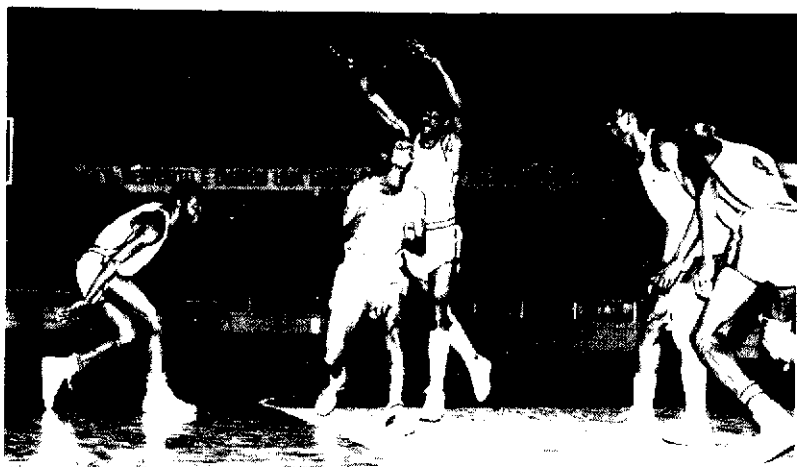
* This volume, to be available from Monthly Review Press in July, is entitled *A Difficult Road: The Transition to Socialism in Mozambique*; in addition to introductory materials and a conclusion by the present author, it contains six case studies of different aspects of Mozambique's socio-economic situation by various authors, two of whom - Judith Marshall and Barry Pinsky - are also TCLSAC members.



New flood drainage system being completed in Maputo.

Alfredo Mueche/AIM

Maxaquene of Mozambique Wins African Championship



Antonia Muchave/AIM

Readers will be glad to learn that there is also a lighter side to the news from Mozambique. Our basketball correspondent was in the arena in Maputo in April when Maxaquene, the Mozambican champion, won the African men's club championship, defeating ASFA of Senegal 79-74. It was the first African championship won by any Mozambican team since independence, a fitting tenth anniversary present to Mozambique from the nation's athletes. Look for a more analytical account of this historic victory in a future issue.

Machel on the bandidos.

Extract from a speech by Samora Machel delivered shortly after the signing of the Nkomati Accord:

"...we came out of this fight with severe wounds. Only future generations will show the precise extent of the social trauma caused by the horrors and barbarity of the armed gangs. The children who witnessed atrocities and repugnant acts of violence and destruction will grow up with the nightmare of their tragic memories. Men and women have been permanently mutilated and maimed, both physically and psychologically. They will be the living evidence of the cruelty of the war waged against us.

"Our people had their property looted, their houses destroyed, their granaries raided, their crops pillaged and flattened, their cattle stolen and killed, their tools burnt and destroyed. The communal villages and cooperatives, the schools and clinics, the wells and dams built by the people with so much effort and sacrifice became targets for the enemy's criminal fury. The systematic destruction of economic infrastructure, bridges and roads, shops and warehouses, sawmills, plantations, agricultural and industrial machinery, electricity supply lines, fuel tanks, lorries and buses, locomotives and carriages has prevented the implementation of economic development projects of the utmost importance for the well being of the Mozambican people.

"840 schools have been destroyed or closed, affecting more than 150,000 schoolchildren. Twelve health centres, 24 maternity clinics, 174 health posts and two centres for the physically handicapped have been sacked and destroyed. 900 shops have been destroyed, hampering marketing and supplies for about four and a half million citizens.

"The bandits have murdered and kidnapped peasants and members of cooperatives, parliamentary deputies and Party militants, teachers and students, nurses, lorry drivers, engine drivers, agricultural, construction and commercial workers, technicians in various sectors, nuns, priests, private shopkeepers, journalists and civil servants..."

"This is the enemy's cruel nature - kill everything, steal everything, burn everything. All this is part of a long process of 20 years of our history, throughout which the Mozambican people have been subjected to systematic and persistent aggression."

President Machel cast this description in the past tense, in the obvious hope that the Nkomati Accord would bring some respite to Mozambique. Unfortunately the substantial costs of South Africa's war of destabilization which he here outlines continue to be paid.

ANC Call To The Nation

The Future Is Within Our Grasp

The following call was issued by the National Executive Committee of the ANC in Lusaka on 25 April 1985. It has been distributed as a leaflet extensively in South Africa, reflecting the current political climate in the country, to spur the masses of the people to greater action...

Events in our country are moving with astonishing speed. In our January 8th message we issued a call for the intensification of our liberation offensive on all fronts, the transportation of more and more localities into mass revolutionary bases, and the need to take further strides towards rendering the country ungovernable.

Only three months have passed since that call was made and already the surge of people's resistance and active defiance have reached new heights. The face of our country is changing before our very eyes.

•In the black ghettos of the urban areas the legitimacy of authority of all types is not just under attack, it has been largely destroyed. Most of those who served the white rule in so-called urban councils have suffered the wrath of the people. But many have respected the demands of the people by resigning.

•The tri-cameral parliament has exposed its complete impotence in the present crisis and continues to be shunned. The Bantustans are universally held in contempt.

•Well-organised stay-aways in localised areas have once again drawn attention to the potential of the organised workers to bring the ruling class to its knees.

•The people, by their actions, are teaching black police and soldiers that there is no place in our communities for those who wear the uniforms of *apartheid* and who carry out orders to kill, maim and torture their brothers and sisters.

•All attempts to tame our fighting students have failed and more and more schools and universities are becoming flashpoints for freedom.

•The continuing street confrontations with the enemy's armed forces show that our people, in massive numbers, not only want a new order in our country but are also prepared to sacrifice life, if need be, to bring it about.

•Fired by the heroic example of *Umkhonto we Sizwe*, more and more of our youth are searching for ways to organise themselves into effective combat units to defend the people, deal with the collaborators, and to hit back selectively at the enemy's armed personnel.

•The people, undaunted by massive state repression, are openly demonstrating over and over again that the ANC is their legitimate and overall leader on the road to People's Power.

On the side of the people the conditions for a revolutionary leap forward are beginning to mature. On the side of the ruling class the economic and political crisis has reached new heights.

It is clear that the racists cannot continue to rule in the old way. The bankrupt and dying regime is being kept alive by those who carry arms in its defence. All attempts by it to find alternative solutions have landed on the rocks. All Botha's reforms, designed to defuse the developing revolutionary assault, trigger off even more vigorous opposition. The promised alteration of the sex laws is the

latest pathetic manoeuvre. It is another gesture to help the external allies of *apartheid* to stem the mounting international tide for the isolation of South Africa. There will be real love across the colour line only when South Africa is completely free.

The growing ferment from below and the deepening crisis from above demand the urgent attention of our whole liberation front and all sectors of our struggling peoples.

The historic conditions which are necessary to ensure the collapse of the *apartheid* system and the creation by the people of a new social order are beginning to take shape in greater measure than ever before in our history. Yet much more remains to be done. It is the urgent task of our liberation movement and of all patriots to stimulate the further growth of those conditions which could bring the day of the people's seizure of power within our sight.

It is against this background that we once again call on all sections of our people to make the *apartheid* system more and more unworkable and the country less and less governable. At the same time we must work endlessly to strengthen all mass and underground organisation and to create the beginnings of popular power.

More particularly:

•We call on our nationally oppressed working class to strengthen and unite the trade union movement and to sharpen the weapon

of workers' power at the point of production in the struggle for national liberation. A long-lasting national work stoppage, backed by our oppressed communities and supported by armed activity, can break the backbone of the *apartheid* system and bring the regime to its knees. All patriots active in industrial organisation must examine the lesson of the recent successful stay-aways in the Transvaal and Eastern Cape and must set their sights on combining national stay-away action with countrywide mass popular actions.

- We call on our communities in the black ghettos to replace the collapsing government stooge councils with people's committees in every block which could become the embryos of people's power.

- We call on our people and, more especially, our fighting youth in every black community, school and university to find ways of organising themselves into small mobile units which will protect the people against the enemy and its agents. Every black area must become a 'no go area' for any isolated individuals or pockets of the enemy's police or armed personnel. The people must find ways to obtain arms by whatever means from the enemy and from any other source. Appropriate forms of combat tactics must be developed for situations in which the enemy is on the rampage against the people. The proliferation of such units and their functioning in accordance with all the rules of underground secrecy will add inestimable power and strength to the armed wing of our liberation movement - *Umkhonto we Sizwe*.

- We call on all those among the black oppressed who serve in the machineries of *apartheid* to resign now. The Bantustans, the so-called parliaments for the Coloured and Indian people, the community councils and other organs of racist power must cease to function. They must find fewer and fewer participants as patri-

ANC CALL TO THE NATION THE FUTURE IS WITHIN OUR GRASP!

Events in our country are moving with astonishing speed. In our January 8th message we issued a call for the intensification of our liberation offensive on all fronts, the transformation of more and more localities into mass revolutionary bases, and the need to take further strides towards rendering the country ungovernable. Only three months have passed since that call was made and already new heights. The face of our country is changing before our very eyes.

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- * All attempts to tame our fighting students have failed and more and more schools and universities are becoming flashpoints for freedom.

ots join in the bitter struggle for power. At a time when so many have fallen and are falling to racist bullets, those who continue to sell their people's birthright will be shunned and made to feel the anger of the masses in both town and countryside.

- We call on the unemployed blacks now sitting in uniform to stop shooting their brothers and sisters in defence of white rule. They must refuse to carry out such orders. They must organise secretly to turn their guns against their masters.

- We call on those in the white community who have been conscripted into the army to refuse, in their own interests and those of their children, to be used as instruments of massacres and military domination over their black fellow citizens and over the people of Namibia, Angola and other parts of Southern Africa.

- We call on all social institutions, religious, cultural, civic and sporting, which retain a belief in the true brotherhood of man, to side even more vigorously with the cause of people's liberation and stand firm against racist intimidation.

- We call on the people everywhere to defy, in an organised way, the imposition of laws founded on race discrimination, to resist all attacks on their living conditions and to promote united resistance and action against the *apartheid* system and its agencies.

- We call on the white community in whose name racist barbarities are being perpetrated daily against the black majority, to move away from its support of *apartheid* and to increase the ranks of the growing number of democratic whites who are participating in our liberation struggle.

•We call, in this *Year of the Cadre*, on all political and military activists to work unceasingly to strengthen the ANC's underground presence and to reinforce our leadership core in every part of the country. The ANC-led liberation movement is the indispensable guide to the whole revolutionary process.

•We call on *Umkhonto we Sizwe* to intensify the armed struggle with all the means at their disposal and, more particularly, to concentrate more and more on actions against the enemy armed forces and police. We also call on our underground to help make such an intensification of armed activity possible by working day and night to create and strengthen our internal political revolutionary bases.

The period ahead presents all of us – whether in or out of the ANC – with an awe-inspiring challenge. Under the leadership of our liberation movement we can and must answer this call of history. Let the blood of our martyrs who are falling before the enemy bullets nourish our battle for freedom. Let our watchwords be:

Unity in Mass Action! Confront the Enemy on all Fronts!

MAKE APARTHEID UNWORKABLE!

MAKE THE COUNTRY UNGOVERNABLE!

FORWARD TO PEOPLE'S POWER

**LONG LIVE THE ANC —
THE VANGUARD OF OUR REVOLUTION**

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C.Solis/Afrapix

Dirty War In Namibia

In late May Luanda announced that the Angola government had captured South African soldiers deep inside the country. Pretoria admitted only that it had lost contact with a small unit engaged in gathering intelligence on the ANC and SWAPO. Already its highly advertised withdrawal of troops from Angola began to ring false.

When one captured *troopie* stated unequivocally that the job of his unit had not been intelligence but the destruction of part of the Gulf Oil facility in Cabinda province of Angola another of Pretoria's cover-ups was exposed.

Although Angola remains in the news, few observers are aware of the scale and ferocity of the escalation of South Africa's war against SWAPO inside Namibia itself, part of a systematic military program to keep the region politically and economically weak and dependent on South Africa. Events in Central America and inside South Africa itself have pushed Namibia off the front page. The war and destruction however continue unabated.

Western media are fed a steady diet of diplomatic moves, shuttle diplomacy by Reagan's Africa specialist Chester Crocker, and the attempts by Pretoria to float a sham independence plan through the Multi-Party Conference. All this is intended to convey a sense of normalcy that Namibia will achieve independence through an evolutionary process. The real story on Namibia however, is being played out on the blood and lives of the Namibian people.

The contours of this story are barely visible, rarely surfacing in the media, and yet it needs to be told concretely if we are to understand why South Africa and its American backers are determined

to hang on to Namibia, come what may.

As of mid 1985 South Africa is still maintaining 100,000 troops in northern Namibia. However, this would be equivalent, given the size of their population, to Canada stationing 600,000 Canadian troops on the Alaska border. Since 1983 South Africa has repeatedly invaded and occupied large parts of Angola and despite the conspicuous withdrawal in April, they continue actively to support anti-government UNITA terrorists there. Local recruitment also has taken place, with the South-West African Territorial Force raising an army from within Namibia. The result has been the militarization of the whole northern half of Namibia, which is where eighty per cent of the population lives. Militarization means, for example, most of the doctors, teachers, dentists, pharmacists are members of the armed forces; almost all the civilians in these vital services have left or been arrested.

South Africa has practised systematic terrorization of the population on a large scale. Missionaries have been a particular target, since most of the missionaries support SWAPO. For example, South Africa has repeatedly blown up the Lutheran printing presses in northern Namibia.

South Africa has herded the population into protected villages, all in the guise of a Civic Action or, as they call it, the WHAM program: Winning the Hearts and Minds. A recent war resister's document entitled *Civic Action: A Sick Facade* had this to say: "*Oshikati and Ondongwa, the two main settlements in the Ovambo war area, would seem to be ideal targets for Civic Action. According to the WHAM strategy one*

would expect a number of assistance projects to be under way, with the army working side by side with the local population to win their hearts and minds. Instead, the settlements are fortified garrison towns surrounded by mile upon mile of sprawling and unsanitary slums. The wealthy white strongholds into which the South African Defense Forces retire at night are protected by heavy security fencing and concentration-camp-like towers housing machine guns. Beyond this perimeter live several thousand black Namibians, forced out of the rural area by the ravages of war and drought and by the SADF depopulation programs. Conditions are appalling. There is no sanitation, running water or rubbish removal, and health facilities are virtually nonexistent. Serious diseases run rampant. Last year an outbreak of bubonic plague spread rapidly, involving at least 500 reported cases. The SADF solution was to distribute rat poison around the fortified perimeters of the towns and army bases to stop the plague spreading to whites or SADF personnel." Committee on South African War Resistance (COSAWR) 1984.

In Angola, South Africa has repeatedly attacked SWAPO bases as far as 300 miles north of the border. In 1978, South Africa attacked a non-combatant SWAPO refugee camp at Kassinga and massacred over 600 unarmed people, mostly women and children. Then they dumped all the bodies into hastily-dug mass graves, soaked them with gasoline and set fire to them, an act of aggression on a par with the more widely publicized 1982 massacre at Sabra and Shatila, Lebanon.

The South African army has committed similar atrocities on a

smaller scale inside the country. Sources inside Namibia say that the incidents reported in the press are only the tip of the iceberg: the annual toll of civilians killed runs into the hundreds. Thousands are beaten and arrested.

Particularly subject to arrest and beatings are the educated and trained element of the non-white population: doctors and nurses, church-men and women, teachers and students are singled out for especially harsh treatment.

Perhaps the most notorious element in South Africa's arsenal of repression is an organization called KOEVOET, a secret paramilitary

unit made up of mercenary blacks and whites whose very existence was unknown until 1980. KOEVOET would frequently enter a village posing as a SWAPO military unit and ask for assistance. If they were refused aid they would torture and kill the villagers, and thus discredit SWAPO; if they were given aid, then they would reveal their true identities as KOEVOET and injure or kill the villagers anyway, for aiding the enemy.

With tactics like that, parallels between Namibia and the Algeria of Franz Fanon become more striking. It was the use of torture by the French that finally led to the

moral revulsion in France and to an ending of the war there.

KOEVOET reveals the totally schizophrenic nature of the South African policy in Namibia. Their stated goal is to win over the hearts and minds of the people so that they will voluntarily want to remain under South African rule. Their *de facto* policy of brutality has precisely the opposite effect. Every independent observer agrees that in any free and fair election SWAPO would win between 60-90% of the vote. It is SWAPO and not South Africa that has overwhelmingly won the hearts and minds of the people of Namibia.



RESISTER

Angola Prepares For Second Party Congress

The Second Ordinary Congress of the MPLA-Workers' Party is scheduled to take place in December 1985. In preparation for this Congress, the Party held its First National Conference in Luanda, 14-19 January 1985. The task of this conference was to assess the work done from the time of the 1980 Special Party Congress up to the present time, including the internal life of the Party, the state, and mass organizations. The Conference was attended by 552 delegates who came from every province of the country. Five Commissions were established, covering issues of the Party itself, social and living conditions of combatants, the economy, production, and education and teaching.

The Opening Speech by President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos became the Conference working document. In this speech, the President provides a lengthy overview of the economy and spells out many of the Party's problems and weaknesses. Since the role of the Party has been identified as one of the most important issues to be discussed at the December Congress, it will be helpful to review some of the comments made in Dos Santos' speech.

In December 1977 the MPLA transformed itself from a mass movement into a vanguard party, and in February 1978 began to review membership and recruitment through the Rectification Campaign. New Party members were to join through their places of work, and during the first year emphasis was placed on industrial workers in urban areas. In 1979 the Rectification Campaign was extended to the rural areas, with priority being given to peasant as-

sociations and cooperatives, and wage labourers on the state farms.

By December 1980, the Rectification Campaign had covered the entire country. The Party then had just over 31,000 members (8.6% of whom were women) with just over half being workers and peasants.

Though the Rectification Campaign was considered a success at the time it occurred, in his January 1985 speech President Dos Santos said that the campaign ended without achieving its goals in the countryside. In particular, the criteria for membership were too restrictive, i.e., the number of agricultural workers was too small, or state farms were not organized, or there were too few peasant associations and cooperatives. As a result the Party is poorly represented in the rural areas, and while central and provincial Party structures were strengthened by the campaign, most of the Party Cells at the local level remain weak. The

MONOGAMY AND PARTY MEMBERSHIP

One of the conditions for MPLA Party membership has been strict monogamy. But there has been a problem of how to deal with the more clandestine concubinage of the cities, compared to the open and traditional polygamy out in the countryside, where this membership condition would affect proportionally more people. A decision has been made to modify the monogamy ruling, permitting older men to maintain their polygamous unions even as Party members, but younger peasants were expected to adhere to the monogamy ruling.

small number of Party members in comparison to the country's total population was also noted as a problem, as this also affects education and recruitment.

Another problem brought up by the President is the top heaviness of the Party structure: the number of administrators is too high compared to the number of members. This means that there is a danger that administrative concerns will take precedence over political concerns. While this situation has been partly overcome by a membership campaign which was launched in December 1981, the need to strengthen the Party's base organizational structure is still considered a priority.

After considering the above and other problems, the Commissions of the National Conference recommended that the December Congress examine in more depth growth of the Party, ideological unity within the party, and the party's authority, prestige and links with the masses. Also to be discussed at the Congress are the parallel market, corruption, the role and responsibility of state enterprises, etc. But overriding all concerns at the Conference was that the requirements for the country's defence along with improving supplies for the population must be given absolute priority.

In November 1985, Angola will celebrate ten years of independence. Yet since the beginning of the struggle for independence in 1961, Angola has not known a day of peace. As a result of the South African-backed war in Angola, hundreds of thousands of Angolans have been made internal refugees. Economic development has been put largely on hold, as



Robert Kramer

the majority of human and material resources must be directed towards survival. Daily, there are reports in the newspapers and on national TV of ambushes against villages, public buses and economic targets. Internal commerce is seriously hampered by both the lack of transport and of consumer goods. Travel, except by plane, is restricted in many areas. On top of this, a drought in some parts of the country, is displacing people from their homes.

The fact that Angola has sur-

vived a decade of independence is itself reason for celebration. Since 1975, South Africa and UNITA - using both conventional and guerrilla tactics - have been intent on economic and social destabilization of Angola. Economic destabilization has occurred, as evidenced by the fact that Angola is compelled to spend 80% of its foreign currency earnings (or 50% to 60% of the national budget) on defence, rather than on the implementation of development programmes. Social disruption is widespread. Be-

tween the war and drought, over one million of Angola's 7.5 million people (1982 population figure) have been displaced, or one out of seven people. Now the war is one of attrition, of South Africa and UNITA trying to wear down the resolve of the country to resist. This has not been achieved. Instead, there is a sense in Angola of an individual and national pride that the country *continues* to resist the strongest opponent on the continent - *apartheid* South Africa.

Report From New York: Ap

BY STEPHANIE URDANG

Stephanie Urdang works for the American Committee on Africa, which has been active in the divestment campaign for many years.

"In one respect at least the divestment forces have already won. They have prevented - discouraged, dissuaded, whatever you call it - billions of dollars in new U.S. investments in South Africa."

Although these words read like a claim of victory by the divestment movement, they are not! Rather they are from John Chettle of the pro-South Africa lobby, the South African Foundation, quoted recently in the Johannesburg *Financial Mail*. They reflect the deep concern of supporters of the *apartheid* regime about the divestment successes in the United States.

Apartheid has become a burning issue in the U.S. The reasons why it has caught on at this juncture are several. The sharp escalation in repression by the South African regime is an obvious factor, along with the intensifying struggle inside that country against labour repression, forced removals, and denial of political rights. There are domestic factors in the U.S. as well. For instance, Jesse Jackson, in his campaign as Presidential candidate last year, persistently brought up the issue - much to the discomfort of the other candidates. The U.S. media gave considerable play to the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to Bishop Desmond Tutu. When announcing this award, the news networks aired footage of the widespread protests and police violence in South Africa, film that had been tucked away in their files and only now was considered newsworthy.

Significant in turning around the public's awareness of *apartheid* South Africa was the publicity given to the arrests of many notables and other protestors during demonstrations at the South African Embassy in Washington. Daily demonstrations were extended to the New York consulate of South Africa as well. Through the bitter cold of winter demonstrators turned out daily and they haven't stopped yet. And in other cities there have been spot protests at sites such as U.S. corporations with operations in South Africa and vendors of Krugerrands. As a backdrop to the protests in the streets there is the new momentum of the divestment campaign. Pushed by groups of citizens, students, trade unionists, church-goers, the campaign is being felt in cities and towns, in the U.S. Congress, on campuses, in trade unions, and in churches. The message is clear: we don't want our money propping up *apartheid* in any way. And the slogan has echoed from campus to campus and city to city: *Divest Now!*

Some of the more dramatic moments in this movement have been played out at the universities. On over 100 campuses anti-*apartheid* actions have taken place, including blockades, occupations and sit-ins. The spark was lit at Columbia University during the two weeks of action against *apartheid* that began on March 21, the 25th anniversary of Sharpeville, and the day that the South African police killed some 42 people walking in a funeral procession. Seven students went on a hunger strike, demanding that Columbia's president meet with student representatives to discuss divestment. By the time he agreed, two students had to be hospitalized. Meanwhile the students had blockaded the front entrance to one of the administra-

tive buildings. For 21 days they remained on the steps, providing a site for a significant alliance of student, community and labour groups. The protest sparked militant campus protests from one end of the country to the other, resulting in the arrests of over 2,000 students. The protests have added at least three more names thus far to the list of over 40 colleges which had taken divestment actions in the past.

Not since the Vietnam war have students in the U.S. launched such widespread demonstrations over an issue that aroused them. The students have been moved by the sense that they can make a difference - they are protesting their own university's involvement in South Africa and they can end that involvement. The heightened political awareness has come when many have dismissed students as generally apolitical. Says Joshua Nessen, student coordinator for the American Committee on Africa, *"We organizers must keep in mind a fundamental political point. The divestment of school stocks in companies linked to South Africa is not an end in itself. Rather it is one means to discourage corporate investment in South Africa. Such discouragement concretely aids the liberation struggle by depriving the regime of resources needed to sustain apartheid."*

The crossover from student actions to legislative actions was graphically shown in San Francisco. In the November election, a non-binding public policy proposition supporting divestment received majority approval. Later, in the climate set by the student protests at Berkeley (where 400 students were arrested) and at other University of California campuses, the Retirement Board

theid Issue Heats Up In the U.S.

for the city began to consider divestment action seriously. In April a demonstration of 60,000 people in San Francisco succeeded in focussing attention on *apartheid* and several other urgent issues. Marching in front were student leaders. Ten days later, the Retirement Board of San Francisco passed one of the strongest of many city divestment bills, calling for the total divestment of \$335 million within two years.

The last five years has seen a steady increase of legislation introduced in states and cities across the United States. Five states have passed divestment legislation of some kind (Connecticut, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan) while in the past few months 28 states have debated such legislation. Over 25 cities have divested and the number of cities considering such actions are too many to keep track of. Even the U.S. Congress, which has never shown much interest in divestment, has before it more than ten different bills aimed at economic sanctions against *apartheid*. By the end of 1984 the amount of public funds affected was over \$2 billion, with several hundred million dollars already divested.

The corporations in the United States with South African investments are nervous. They are mounting anti-divestment pressure. So is the South African government, which recently established a special unit in the Department of Foreign Affairs to counter the campaign. The American Chamber of Commerce in South Africa which represents the 350 U.S. companies doing business there has spawned a separate organization, also based in South Africa, geared to organizing against divestment. According to a recent article in the *Wall Street Journal* they see the writing



Martin Jeong/UPI

on the wall. Many U.S. companies were "questioning the value of staying". The nervousness was described as "fuelled both by events in South Africa - where growing racial polarization clouds the economic as well as the political outlook - and by pure U.S. domestic politics".

Seventeen years ago when I first arrived in the United States and told people I came from South Africa, the response would invariably be: "Oh, and what country?" - thinking that South Africa was a region of Africa in the way South America is a region of the Americas. Now the questions are sophisticated and spot on, and express a revulsion at the system of *apartheid*.

At a recent rally in Harlem to honour Oliver Tambo, President of

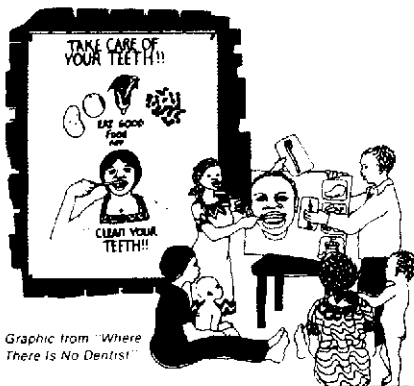
the African National Congress, a student from Columbia was among the speakers. The church hall was packed with over 1,000 people who kept still as he recounted the events at his university. He said how important this action was, more important than grades or the real risk of expulsion. They had their sense of self-dignity. His voice broke and he could not go on. The crowd rose as one, clapping spontaneously and roaring their support. The chant ...A!..N!..C!... took over and continued without break until he had recovered. The moment was electric and very emotional. It encapsulated the new mood of support for the struggles against *apartheid* in South Africa and for those who are putting themselves on the line in the United States.

Working Links

Solidarity has a texture, including the growing networks of working links between people involved in similar areas and issues in Canada and southern Africa. In this column, we hope to keep you posted (and engaged in building up) these working links. We have focussed first on links with Mozambique and invite your input in highlighting links with other countries in the region in future issues.

•Efforts are being made to link workers involved in grain handling in Mozambique and in Canada. Cooperante Don Kossick's stay in Mozambique included various contacts with workers and management at CIM, a large company in Matola, Maputo's industrial suburb that mills wheat and maize and produces pasta. Don's immediate task was to advise on housing as part of his Maputo City Council brief to encourage the organization of construction cooperatives for everything from improved latrines to housing for urban workers. Factories like CIM got involved in the programme, making factory resources available (transport, requisitions for scarce building materials like cement) as a support to cooperatives of factory workers building homes for themselves. Out of these contacts came discussions about worker health and safety issues related to grain handling. On his return to Saskatchewan, Don began contacts with the Grain Handlers Union in Saskatchewan and plans are going forward to send a team to Mozambique to exchange experiences and plan ways to collaborate.

•The working links have teeth in them! Saskatchewan dentist Murray Dickson took to his work in Mozambique his knowledge of a dental programme based in Prince



Albert which trained parodontal workers for isolated northern communities. The training included basic dental care and education programmes along the lines of his recently published book, *Where There is No Dentist*. Keith Davey, a dentist involved in the Prince Albert programme, was invited for a working visit to Mozambique in 1983 under CUSO auspices; the first Mozambican dentists spent time in Prince Albert in 1984. Now a whole project of joint training and development of parodontal programmes with CIDA funding is in place. Murray will join a camera

crew in Mozambique this summer to do a film on the project.

•Direct working links between teachers are also beginning to take shape. Teachers' organizations in both British Columbia and Quebec have been invited by the Mozambican Teachers Organization (MTO) to send delegates to a conference in Mozambique in October on the theme "The role of teachers and their organizations in the struggle against racism and apartheid". Meanwhile, the British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF) has made a project grant of \$10,000 to the MTO to help them furnish their new headquarters in a big old house on the corner of Eduardo Mondlane and Julius Nyerere streets in Maputo. Money has gone for typewriters, a mimeograph machine and lots of stencils, paper and ink!

We think these direct people-to-people links are vital - creating some space, in the midst of often bleak and individualizing times, to celebrate love and solidarity.



Sam Barnes

The Gods Must Be Crazy

But the producers know exactly what they are doing

BY RICHARD B. LEE

Richard Lee is a Toronto-based anthropologist who has worked with the San for over twenty years.

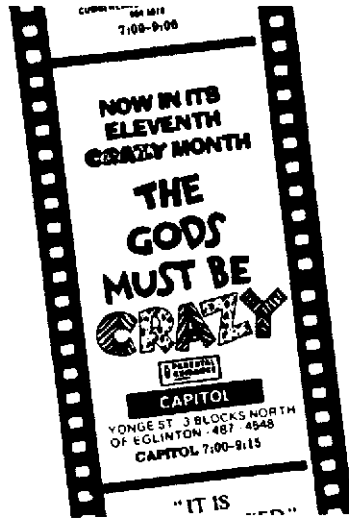
Welcome to *Apartheid* funland, where white and black mingle easily, where the savages are noble and civilization is in question, and where the humour is nonstop.

These are the images packaged in Jamie Uys' hit film, *The Gods Must Be Crazy* now playing to capacity audiences around the world.

South Africa's previous successes in international film distribution have served their racism well. *The Wild Geese* (1974) glorified the atrocities of white mercenaries in the 1960's Congo crisis. Here a handful of macho whites routinely vanquished countless, faceless blacks. In the 1964 production of *Zulu* the same premise was transposed to the 19th century as a handful of British soldiers triumphed over wave after wave of Zulu *impis* at the battle of Rorke's Drift. (In the priceless Monty Python spoof of this film one of the white soldiers pauses in mid-battle casually to light his pipe with the flames from his severed and burning leg). In these films the message was simple and brutal: 10,000 or more of the darker races are really no match for a few good (white) men.

Given this track record, the viewer is quite unprepared and initially disarmed by *The Gods Must Be Crazy*. The white male lead is played as a klutz, and the "hero" is a naked brown man. Civilization is viewed with skepticism and the virtues of the natural world are extolled. And the film is funny and not preachy. Hey, maybe these South Africans are not such a bad lot after all!

The film opens with a highly romanticized ethnography of the primitive Bushmen in their remote home in "Botswana". (Actually the film was shot in Namibia). The voice-over extols the virtues of their simple life. Into this idyllic scene comes a Coke bottle thrown from a passing plane. Discord erupts among the happy folk as they strive to possess the bottle. Clearly heaven has made a mistake (hence the film's title)



and N!au, the Bushman hero resolves to remove the offending item by carrying it to the ends of the earth. On his journey he encounters a white game biologist (the klutz) and his coloured side-kick, a beautiful white school-teacher and a band of Keystone Cops Marxist revolutionaries on the run from a botched coup in an unspecified African country to the north (Angola?). In the end the Bushman foils the baddies, the biologist wins the school teacher and the Bushman disposes of the bottle, and returns to his people. Happiness reigns once again in *Apartheidland*.

Both viewers and reviewers are taken in by the charm and innocence of the Gods ... especially the sympathetic portrayal of the non-whites. The clever sight gags evoke laughter that ignores political ideologies. But there is more to this film than meets the eye.... a great deal more.

First, there is the incredibly patronizing attitude towards the Bushmen, or San as I prefer to call them. The Bushman as Noble Savage is a peculiar piece of white South African racial mythology. In the popular press the Bushman are a favorite weekend magazine topic. Their remarkable skills as trackers, their oneness with the wild, and their cooperative and sharing way of life are lauded, in contrast to the anxieties of urban life, and in unstated but pointed contrast to the grasping, ungrateful and dangerous black majority the whites regularly come in contact with. The San represent the land as it once was and the good native as he once was. The message is clear. Left to their own devices the unspoiled natives are good. Only when they are exposed to civilization do they then become bad, i.e. communist.

These sympathetic attitudes of contemporary whites contrast with those of the past. In the 18th and 19th centuries the Afrikaners of the frontier invaded the lands of the San and hunted them for sport and bounty. The Cape Archives document a century of systematic extermination. The San were hounded to virtual extinction by the whites within South Africa by 1880.

Compelled by complex motives of romanticism, the conservation ethic, and liberal guilt, 20th Century white south Africans have

rehabilitated the San and given them a place as the virtual mascots of the *Apartheid* world-view. The books of Lauren Van der Post and the film of Jamie Uys both spring from this vision. Beyond this vague liberalism, in Uys' case there isn't a trace of opposition to *apartheid*.

In addition to the film's patronizing attitude I was appalled by its bald-faced misrepresentation of the contemporary San. To say that there are San today who are untouched by civilization is a cruel joke. The !Kung San of Namibia where the film was made, have been subject to 25 years of forced acculturation and 10 years of wholesale recruitment into the South African army (see article

on Namibia elsewhere in this issue). The modern !Kung in order to appear in the film had to hide their denims, transistor radios and canned beer, and reach into



their trunks for clothing, long since abandoned, sewn from the skins of game animals. All of the actors in the film had themselves spent time

or had relatives on South African army bases.

A much better film is *N'ai: The Story of a !Kung Woman* made by John Marshall (1980). It documents the mission station, welfare, weekend-drunk quality of !Kung life in a Namibian native reserve, a picture that will have uncomfortable parallels for Canadians. A Canadian or American film-maker could never get away with the patronizing condescension of Uys' portrayal of the San, and it is high time that *The Gods Must Be Crazy* be recognized for the smarmy whitewash of *Apartheid* that it is. Jamie Uys was in Los Angeles in April for talks with 20th Century Fox so you can be sure that *Gods-II* is in the pipeline.



A recent letter to the New York Times by anthropologist Toby Volkman sheds more light on Jamie Uys' misuse of the Bushman.

The illusion of the "innocent charm" of Bushman life in the Kalahari Desert of southern Africa may explain the immense international popularity of *The Gods Must Be Crazy* (Arts and Leisure, April 28), but that should not make you uncritical of everything the film's director, Jamie Uys, says of the Bushman's lot.

N!Xau, the leading Bushman in the film - who has never seen such a thing before as the Coca-Cola bottle dropped from a plane that begins the action - had certainly seen more than one white man before he encountered Mr. Uys in the late 1970's. White administrators had been in the Kalahari for decades. So had white schoolteachers, anthropologists, writers, film makers and, since 1978, the South African Defense Force. N!Xau grew up as a herdboys on a Herero farm in Botswana and moved in 1976 to Bushmanland (Namibia) to take a job as a cook in the local school...

Because the myth of Bushman innocence and bliss underlies the popularity of *The Gods Must Be Crazy*, it is no surprise that Mr. Uys would like us to believe in it. There is, however, little to laugh about in Bushmanland: 1,000 demoralized, formerly independent foragers crowd into a squalid, tubercular homeland, getting by on handouts of cornmeal and sugar, drinking Johnnie Walker or home brew, fighting with one another and joining the South African Army.

The most disastrous consequence of the Edenic myth is a plan to expropriate the last fragment of land belonging to N!Xau's people for a game reserve, on which Bushmen will not be permitted to raise crops or livestock. On land that cannot sustain them as foragers they will be asked to hunt and gather with bows and arrows and digging sticks, recreating images of the past for the pleasure of the tourists.

